

HOUSE BILL NO. 175

INTRODUCED BY P. CLARK

BY REQUEST OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CLARIFYING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OVERSIGHT DUTIES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL; AMENDING SECTION 75-1-324, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 75-1-324, MCA, is amended to read:

"75-1-324. Duties of environmental quality council. The environmental quality council shall:

(1) gather timely and authoritative information concerning the conditions and trends in the quality of the environment, both current and prospective, analyze and interpret the information for the purpose of determining whether the conditions and trends are interfering or are likely to interfere with the achievement of the policy set forth in 75-1-103, and compile and submit to the governor and the legislature studies relating to the conditions and trends;

(2) review and appraise the various programs and activities of the state agencies, in the light of the policy set forth in 75-1-103, for the purpose of determining the extent to which the programs and activities are contributing to the achievement of the policy and make recommendations to the governor and the legislature with respect to the policy;

(3) develop and recommend to the governor and the legislature state policies to foster and promote the improvement of environmental quality to meet the conservation, social, economic, health, and other requirements and goals of the state;

(4) conduct investigations, studies, surveys, research, and analyses relating to ecological systems and environmental quality;

(5) document and define changes in the natural environment, including the plant and animal systems, and accumulate necessary data and other information for a continuing analysis of these changes or trends and an interpretation of their underlying causes;

(6) make and furnish studies, reports on studies, and recommendations with respect to matters of policy

1 and legislation as the legislature requests;

2 (7) analyze legislative proposals in clearly environmental areas and in other fields in which legislation
3 might have environmental consequences and assist in preparation of reports for use by legislative committees,
4 administrative agencies, and the public;

5 (8) consult with and assist legislators who are preparing environmental legislation to clarify any
6 deficiencies or potential conflicts with an overall ecologic plan;

7 (9) review and evaluate operating programs in the environmental field in the several agencies to identify
8 actual or potential conflicts, both among the activities and with a general ecologic perspective, and suggest
9 legislation to remedy the situations; and

10 (10) perform the administrative rule review, draft legislation review, program evaluation, and monitoring
11 functions of an interim committee for the following executive branch agencies and the entities attached to the
12 agencies for administrative purposes:

13 (a) department of environmental quality;

14 (b) department of fish, wildlife, and parks; and

15 (c) department of natural resources and conservation."

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17 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

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